Improvement of Cochin Shipyard

1139. SHRI THENNALA BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for the improvement of the Cochin Shipyard Ltd.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. In order to improve the production capacity of the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), the Government has been assisting the Yard through Plan Assistance. During the 8th Plan period an amount of Rs. 47.80 crores has been allocated and schemes totalling to Rs. 55.79 crores have been sanctioned so far by the Government of India. Out of this an amount of Rs. 24.55 crore has been released to CSL up to 31.3.1996.

Vacancies in Armed Forces

1140. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 25,000 posts are lying vacant in armed forces, as on date;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) the reasons of such a large number of vacancies; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to fill them up immediately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (d) There are some shortages in certain ranks in the Defence Services. Such shortages are not a new phenomenon. One of the reasons for shortages is the cadre structure of the Armed Forces. To make up the deficiencies measures such as introduction of University Entry Scheme, enhanced recruitment of permanent commissioned officers and Short Service Commissioned officers, induction of women as officers in the Armed Forces etc. have been taken.

Survey on performance of C-DOT

1141. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any survey about the working/performance of C-DOT since itsformation; and

(b) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Regular periodic reviews of C-DOT working/performance are being undertaken by Government since its formation.

(b) Such reviews have helped the C-DOT to develop a range of products in Telecom Switching as well as in Telecom Transmission. Presently there are more than 4 million lines of C-DOT design in Indian Telecom Network which has resulted in a substantial saving in foreign exchange. C-DOT has also played a catalytic role in establishment of infrastructure for production of electronic components.

नेपाल में भारतीय शिक्षकों द्वारा हड़ताल करना

1142. **श्री रामदेव भंडारी:** क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 3 जुलाई, 1996 के नवभारत टाइम्स दिल्ली में "नेपाल में भारतीय शिक्षक आमरण अनशन पर बैठे" शीर्षक से प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है और सरकार शिक्षकों की समस्याओं का समाधान करने के लिये क्या कार्रवाई कर रही है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल): (क) जी हां। सरकार ने नेपाल में भारतीय अध्यापकों द्वारा अनिश्चितकालीन हड़ताल के बारे में खबरें देखी हैं।

(ख) नेपाल में भारतीय अध्यापकों को अब तक स्थायी दर्जा नहीं दिया गया है। "भारतीय अध्यापक संघ नेपाल" के कुछ पदाधिकारियों ने अपनी मांगों को लेकर भूख हड़ताल कर दी थी। काठमाण्डू स्थित हमारे राजदूतावास के कहने पर नेपाल के अधिकारियों ने इस संघ के पदाधिकारियों के साथ बातचीत की है। नेपाल की सरकार के प्राधिकारियों के साथ बातचीत के बाद नेपाल में तैनात हमारे राजदूत ने भारतीय अध्यापकों को

नेपाल की सरकार के प्राधिकारियों के इस आश्वासन से अवगत कराया है कि नेपाल की सरकार इस मामले को संतोषजनक ढंग से सुलझाने के लिए तैयार है और वह अध्यापकों से सीधी बातचीत करना चाहती है। इस आश्वासन के बाद अब भूख हड़ताल समाप्त कर दी गयी है।

Visit of Chief Passport Officer to Regional Offices

1143. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Passport Officer visits the various regional passport offices in the country;

(b) if so, when was his last visit to Andhra Pradesh;

(c) the findings on the long delays and poor service in Andhra Pradesh;

(d) whether Government propose to tone up the Passport Office in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) the steps proposed for 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 25th March 1996.

(c) The Chief Passport Officer made an on-the-spot assessment of the functioning of the Passport office. The Passport office, Hyderabad was found to be functioning quite smoothly and satisfactorily. It is issuing passport within 35 to 39 days.

(d) and (e) Streamlining of the working of Passport Offices has recently been stepped up. Specific mention could be made of introduction of the tele-inquiry system as also data entry of Index Cards which is targetted to be completed during the year 1996-97. The Passport Office was moved to new, more spacious premises during the year 1995; it was computerised and better facilities by way of installation of modern office equipment etc. were provided.

गंगा नदी को दक्षिणी राज्यों में बहने वाली नदियों के साथ मिलाया जाना

1144. श्री राम जेठमलानी: क्या जल संसाधन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 21 फरवरी, 1996 के "इंडियन एक्सप्रैस" में "गेनस फ्रोम लिंकिंग दि मेजर रिवरस" शीर्षक से प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह सच है कि उत्तरी राज्यों में बहने वाली हिमालय पर्वत से निकली गंगा नदी को दक्षिणी राज्यों में बहने वाली नदियों के प्रवाह में सम्मिलित कर समुद्र तक पहुंचाने की परियोजना के कार्यान्वयन से देश के दोनों छोरों को लाभ प्राप्त होगा;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो इस पर सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है; और

(घ) क्या सरकार का गंगा नदी को दक्षिणी क्षेत्र में बहने वाली किसी नदी से मिलाने के संबंध में कोई सर्वेक्षण करवाने का विचार है; यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण है?

जल संसाधन मंत्री (श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र): (क) जी हां।

(ख) जी हां।

(ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

(घ) जी, हां।

Visit of Indian defence delegation to U.K.

1145. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level Indian defence delegation visited U.K., France and Italy in 1st April, 1996 for deals for the purchase of arms worth 72 million US dollars; and

(b) if so, the details of the composition of the delegation and items likely to be purchased?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.